(a) whether Government have received complaints regarding non-payment of wages at Government's prescribed rates; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to ensure the payment of minimum wages to the labourers?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) The Government at times receives complaints regarding non payment of minimum wages

(b) The officers of both Central and State enforcement machineries are appointed as inspectors under the statutory provisions of the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. They conduct regular inspections and advise the employers to make payment of short fall of wages whenever they come across any case of non payment or less payment of wages. They can invoke penal provisions prescribed under this Act. Both Central and State Governments try to strengthen and streamline their enforcement machineries for effective implementation of the Minimum Wages Act.

Indian Overseas Welfare Fund

1713. SHRI SUDARSHAN AKARAPU: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently set up a new "Indian Overseas Welfare Fund" for the welfare of overseas Indian workers;

(b) if so, the details thereof,

(c) the details of the total corpus and the objectives of the fund; and

(d) the total financial assistance extented to overseas workers as on the 31st March, 2004?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Status and upgradation of ITIs in Uttaranchal

1714 SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several ITIs (Industrial Training Institutes) have been operating in different regions of Uttaranchal;